

Remarks

This Preliminary Amendment cancels, without prejudice, claims 1-7 in the underlying PCT Application No. PCT/EP98/01391. This Preliminary Amendment further adds new claims 8-18. The new claims conform the claims to U.S. Patent and Trademark Office rules and do not add new matter to the application.

The above amendments to the specification and abstract conform the specification and abstract to U.S. Patent and Trademark Office rules, and do not introduce new matter into the application.

The underlying PCT Application No. PCT/EP98/01391 includes an International Search Report dated September 8, 1998. The International Search Report includes a list of documents that were uncovered in the underlying PCT Application. A copy of the International Search Report is included herewith. Also enclosed is a translation of the International Search Report.

The underlying PCT Application also includes an International Preliminary Examination Report dated August 30, 1999. A copy of the International Preliminary Examination Report is included herewith. Also enclosed is a translation of the International Preliminary Examination Report.

It is respectfully submitted that the subject matter of the present application is new, non-obvious, and useful. Prompt consideration and allowance of the application are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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